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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SENV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [FI](#) [EU](#)
SUBJECT: FINNISH VIEW ON US-EU SUMMIT PREPARATIONS, AFGHAN
DONATIONS, RENDITION FLIGHTS

REF: A. (A) HELSINKI 219

- [1](#)B. (B) THOME-EVANS E-MAIL 18 MAY 2006
- [1](#)C. (C) SCHLAEFER-EUR/NB E-MAIL 24 MAY 2006

Classified By: Gregory Thome, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: U/S for Political Affairs Lyra told Ambassador that the US and EU are making good progress toward finalizing Summit Declarations, although more work needs to be done to create a real dialogue on climate change and to find language that is not counterproductive to our shared goals regarding energy security and Russia. Separately, Lyra said that a Finnish donation of excess military equipment to the Afghan security forces was "politically not easy," but expressed caution optimism. He also raised a recent media report about an alleged rendition flight through Finland in 2004. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) Ambassador called on Finnish MFA Undersecretary for Political Affairs Markus Lyra May 24. Lyra will visit Washington May 31 for consultations regarding Finland's EU Presidency and to discuss the ongoing US-EU Summit Declaration negotiations.

Climate Change and Energy Security

[1](#)3. (SBU) Lyra said that climate change is at the top of the EU agenda for the Summit. Europe and the US need to stop talking past one another and to begin an actual dialogue on this difficult challenge, Lyra said, acknowledging that this would require that Europe "avoid mentioning Kyoto." The EU has offered language for the Declaration that is "very reasonable," he continued, noting that most member states strongly support the current EU draft and are eager to see a declaration that allows Europe and the United States to start addressing in concrete ways the climate change problem. Ambassador welcomed the idea of a dialogue centered around concrete actions, and noted that moving beyond Kyoto was a helpful place to start that process.

[1](#)4. (C) On energy security, Lyra said the US and the EU broadly agree on both desired end states and the means to get there: market-based pricing, adequate investment in infrastructure, diversity of supply, new technologies. However, Lyra cautioned, if the Summit language is too blunt, it will have a counterproductive result not only in Moscow but also in Central Asia. For example, the EU and the US agree that a charter that effectively requires Russia to dismantle energy monopolies is clearly desirable; however, it will yield no results if the US and Europe "pre-cook a deal and present it as a fait accompli," he said. No one underestimates the problems and, indeed, the obfuscation Russia is engaging in, Lyra continued. Russian promises to "marketize" prices, de-politicize supply to certain of its neighbors, and increase investment (despite Gazprom's hollow assertions that investment has been

sufficient) are not being fulfilled, which is troublesome. The key for the Summit and Finland's presidency will be to state and implement an agenda that brings Russia into a modern energy framework without exacerbating deeply ingrained suspicions. The Ambassador responded by noting that while alienating the Russians is in no one's interest, neither is a status quo that permits Russia to cling to outdated, politicized means of supplying energy. She acknowledged the EU's hesitancy about, for example, tough language in the Summit Declarations, but emphasized that Europe and the US needed to come together in a way that protects their own interests and lays down markers to Russia regarding what real partnership means.

Afghan Arms Donation

15. (SBU) Turning to Afghanistan, the Ambassador reminded Lyra of the standing US request that Finland donate a large lot of excess AK-47s (and possibly some additional equipment) to the Afghan security forces (Refs A and B). Lyra was well-briefed on the issue, and noted that the Minister of Defense would be issuing a formal recommendation on June 5. The MOD's position, as Lyra understood it, was that with ongoing upgrades and some changes in GOF defense planning, the AKs had indeed become excess and Afghan donation seemed like a logical means of disposal. However, he added, "politically it is not easy." The GOF has had an unwritten but long-standing policy of donating only non-lethal equipment in unstable, conflict-prone regions, mainly for fear that ultimately the weapons could end up in the wrong hands. On the other hand, the GOF was well aware that the Afghans' capabilities and professionalism had improved and that increased security problems demanded adequate equipment. The Ambassador highlighted the needs in Afghanistan and noted that the US would not be making the request if it had strong doubts

about where the weapons might end up. Lyra acknowledged this and expressed guarded optimism that if the MOD strongly recommended in favor of the donation, the GOF would approve it.

More Rendition Flight Allegations

16. (C) Finally, Lyra raised a May 22 Finnish television report alleging that a CIA rendition flight transited Helsinki in late 2004 (Ref C). Lyra agreed that the report offered little evidence regarding the alleged flight, and accepted the Ambassador's statements indicating that the US does not condone torture but cannot comment on specific flights. The Ambassador expressed appreciation that FM Tuomioja had sought to downplay the allegations in the press, and Lyra responded that the GOF did not wish to make a big issue out of the TV report.

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